

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 DHA-02 MCT-01 AF-10 ARA-14
EA-09 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 EB-07 IGA-02 ACDA-10
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-----045265 230130Z /70

R 222340Z JUL 77
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4598
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 3 USUN 2348

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, XF
SUBJ: PLO PRESS CONFERENCE JULY 22, 1977

1. PLO OBSERVER TERZI HELD PRESS CONFERENCE AT UN HEADQUARTERS
AT SAME TIME AS ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER BEGIN WAS MEETING
WITH SECRETARY GENERAL WALDHEIM ON JULY 22. OFFICE OF PRESS
INFORMATION SUMMARY FOLLOWS:

2. QTE: ZEHDY LABIB TERZI, PERMANENT OBSERVER OF THE PALESTINE
LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO), HELD A PRESS BRIEFING AT
12:20 P.M. TODAY.

HE FIRST READ THE FOLLOWING PREPARED STATEMENT:

"ALL PEACE-LOVING PEOPLES MUST VIEW WITH A PROFOUND SENSE OF
REGRET MENACHEN BEGIN'S APPEARANCE THIS AFTERNOON AT THE
UNITED NATIONS.

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"ON DECEMBER 4, 1948, A LETTER APPEARED IN THE NEW YORK
TIMES. ALONG OTHER THINGS, IT READS:

'AMONG THE MOST DISTURBING POLITICAL PHENOMENA OF OUR TIME
IS THE EMERGENCE IN THE NEWLY CREATED STATE OF ISRAEL
OF THE 'FREEDOM PARTY' (TNAUT HAHERUT), A POLITICAL PARTY

CLOSELY AKIN IN ITS ORGANIZATION, METHODS, POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY, AND SOCIAL APPEAL TO THE NAZI AND FASCIST PARTIES. IT WAS FORCED OUT OF THE MEMBERSHIP AND FOLLOWING OF THE FORMER IRGUN ZVAI LEUNI, A TERRORIST, RIGHT-WING, CHAUVINIST ORGANIZATION IN PALESTINE.

"THE CURRENT VISIT OF MENACHEN BEGIN, LEADER OF THIS PARTY, TO THE UNITED STATES IS OBVIOUSLY CALCULATED TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF AMERICAN SUPPORT FOR HIS PARTY IN THE COMING ISRAELI ELECTIONS, AND TO CEMENT POLITICAL TIES WITH CONSERVATIVE ZIONIST ELEMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES. SEVERAL AMERICANS OF NATIONAL REPUTE HAVE LENT THEIR NAMES TO WELCOME HIS VISIT. IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT THOSE WHO OPPOSE FASCISM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, IF CORRECTLY INFORMED AS TO MR. BEGIN'S POLITICAL RECORD AND PERSPECTIVE, COULD ADD THEIR NAMES AND SUPPORT TO THE MOVEMENT HE REPRESENTS.

"THE LETTER WAS WRITTEN BY SEVERAL PROMINENT MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMUNITY -- INCLUDING ALBERT EINSTEIN AND HANNA ARENDT.

"AFTER DESCRIBING BEGIN AND HIS GANG'S ROLE IN TERRORIZING THE PALESTINIAN POPULATION -- INCLUDING THE MASSACRE OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE VILLAGE OF DEIR YASSIN, THE LETTER DESCRIBES THEIR VIOLENCE AGAINST THE
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JEWISH COMMUNITY IN PALESTINE.

"THE DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN THE BOLD CLAIMS BEING MADE BY BEGIN AND HIS PARTY, AND THEIR RECORD OF PAST PERFORMANCE IN PALESTINE BEAR THE ... UNMISTAKABLE STAMP OF A FASCIST PARTY.'

"THIS IS THE RECORD OF THE MEN WHO IS CURRENTLY IN THIS BUILDING. THIS IS THE RECORD OF THE MAN WHO HAS COME TO WASHINGTON BRINGING WITH HIM A 'PLAN'.

"BEGIN'S SO-CALLED 'PEACE PLAN' IS IN FACT A WAR PLAN. BEGIN'S REQUEST FOR 150 F-16S AND THE IMMEDIATE RESPONSE OF THE USA IS CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF THE FACT THAT IT IS A WAR PLAN. HIS PLAN IS A BOLD ATTEMPT TO SKIRT THE ISSUES, TO BUY TIME, SO THAT THE ZIONISTS MIGHT CONSOLIDATE THEIR GRASP ON THE TERRITORIES WHICH THEY SEIZED AND CONTINUE TO HOLD BY FORCE AND BRUTALITY.

"BEGIN'S PLAN IS A WAR PLAN IN THAT IT DOES NOT DEAL WITH THE HEART OF THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT -- THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE AND THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN

PEOPLE, INCLUDING HUMAN RIGHTS.

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USIA-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 EB-07 IGA-02 ACDA-10
/155 W

-----045361 230135Z /70

R 222340Z JUL 77
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4599
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
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"HE CONTINUES TO DENY THE MAIN PARTY TO THE CONFLICT
REPRESENTATION AT THE PEACE CONFERENCE. BEGIN MAINTAINS
THAT HE WILL NOT BRING TO THE PEACE CONFERENCE ANY PRE-
CONDITIONS. IS NOT THIS DENIAL ITSELF A PRE-CONDITION?
THOSE WHO REQUIRE OTHERS NOT TO POSE PRE-CONDITIONS ARE
THEMSELVES IMPOSING THEIR OWN.

"BEGIN'S PLAN ENVISIONS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A BANTUSTAN
FOR THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. IT CALLS FOR THE PERPETUATION
OF AGGRESSION AGAINST THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. BEGIN CALLS
FOR THE ANNULMENT OF THE UN CHARTER, THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION
OF HUMAN RIGHTS, AND ALSO THE RESOLUTIONS DEFINING AND
AFFIRMING THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN
PEOPLE. HE ALSO CALLS FOR THE ANNULMENT OF UN RESOLUTIONS
RELEVANT TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JUST PEACE IN THE AREA.
BUT THIS SHOULD NOT SURPRISE US. YOU ALL RECALL THAT ONLY
TWO MEMBER STATES IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY VOTED
AGAINST A RESOLUTION TO GET THE PEACE CONFERENCE IN MOTION.
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I REFER TO RESOLUTION A/RES/31/62 AND THE TWO MEMBER STATES ARE THE USA AND ISRAEL.

"BEGIN THINKS IN TERMS OF PEACE BASED ONLY ON 'SECURITY'. AN EXPANSIONIST USURPER MUST THINK OF KEEPING WAR SPOILS. WE PALESTINIANS, WHO HAVE SUFFERED IN EXILE, WHO HAVE BEEN DEPRIVED OF OUR HOMES AND PROPERTY AND WHO ARE DAILY LIVING UNDER THE YOKE OF ZIONIST OPPRESSION, FIND MR. BEGIN'S WORRIES ABOUT 'SECURITY' RATHER IRONIC AND HYPOCRITICAL. WE LIVE THE MISERABLE FACTS OF LIFE WHILE HE IS IN A SPELL OF SPECULATION AND FEARS. WE THINK AND STRIVE FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF JUSTICE AS A BASIS FOR PEACE WHILE BEGIN AND THE USA ARE BOLSTERING THE LETHAL ARSENAL IN PREPARATION FOR WAR.

"A SO-CALLED MIDDLE EAST 'SETTLEMENT' WHICH IS BASED ON THE PERPETUATION OF OPPRESSION AND INJUSTICE LEADS INEVITABLY TO WAR. A VALID AND VIABLE PEACE WILL BE SECURED ONLY WHEN THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION, THE UNIVERSALLY ACKNOWLEDGED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE, IS PARTY TO THE EFFORTS TOWARDS THE ATTAINMENT OF PEACE.

"IN THE MEETING OF MARCH 2-20, 1977, THE PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL DECIDED TO PURSUE THE STRUGGLE TO REGAIN THE NATIONAL RIGHTS OF OUR PEOPLE, FIRST AND FOREMOST OF WHICH ARE THE RIGHTS TO RETURN, TO EXERCISE SELF-DETERMINATION AND TO ESTABLISH ITS OWN NATIONAL INDEPENDENT STATE OVER ITS NATIONAL SOIL.

"IT ALSO AFFIRMED THE RIGHT OF THE PLO TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES, FORUMS AND EFFORTS DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM OF PALESTINE AND THE ARAB-ZIONIST CONFLICT, ON AN INDEPENDENT AND EQUAL FOOTING, FOR THE FULFILMENT OF UNCLASSIFIED

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OUR NATIONAL INALIENABLE RIGHTS, WHICH HAVE BEEN RECOGNIZED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS SINCE 1974, PARTICULARLY IN RESOLUTION 3236."

A CORRESPONDENT NOTED THAT MR. TERZI HAD SAID MR. BEGIN WAS PREPARING FOR WAR. WHEN DID HE EXPECT THE WAR TO START? MR. TERZI SAID "ASK THE STATE DEPARTMENT; ASK THE AMERICAN ESTABLISHMENT; ASK BEGIN. THEY ARE PREPARING FOR IT."

ASKED IF HE WOULD SETTLE FOR A PLO "PRESENCE" AT GENEVA, MR. TERZI SAID "WE ARE NOT A CHEERING CROWD. WE ARE THE PRINCIPAL PARTY TO THE ISSUE AND WE MUST PLAY OUR ROLE

AS THE PRINCIPAL PARTY". HE ADDED THAT UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTIONS CLEARLY STATED THAT THE PLO MUST ATTEND THE GENEVA CONFERENCE ON AN EQUAL FOOTING WITH ALL OTHER PARTICIPANTS. HE SAID AFTER 30 YEARS OF DISPERSAL "THE PALESTINIANS WILL DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES". THEY WOULD NOT "DEAL WITH THE ISSUES BY PROXY. THEY WILL DEAL WITH THE ISSUES DIRECTLY."

A CORRESPONDENT SAID MR. BEGIN AND MR. CARTER APPEARED TO HAVE AGREED TO RESUME THE GENEVA CONFERENCE IN OCTOBER. WAS MR. TERZI OPTIMISTIC OR PESSIMISTIC ABOUT SUCH A TIMETABLE?

MR. TERZI SAID EARLIER THIS YEAR PRESIDENT CARTER HAD SAID THERE SHOULD NOT BE A GENEVA CONFERENCE UNTIL PRELIMINARY PREPARATIONS GAVE GOOD INDICATIONS FOR FRUITFUL RESULTS. THIS WEEK MR. CARTER HAD SAID STRONG DIFFERENCES REMAINED. "HOW THEN CAN HE OPT TO FIX A DATE?" HE ASKED. SINCE HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND THIS, HE SAID, HE COULD NEITHER SAY HE WAS PESSIMISTIC NOR OPTIMISTIC REGARDING A RESUMED CONFERENCE IN OCTOBER.

ASKED ABOUT THE TALKS BETWEEN FORMER GOVERNOR SCRANTON
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OF THE UNITED STATES AND A PLO REPRESENTATIVE, MR. TERZI SAID THESE TALKS WERE NO SECRET. THE PLO HAD LONG DIRECTED A DIPLOMATIC EFFORT TO TRY TO HAVE DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION. HE RECALLED THAT SENATOR MCGOVERN HAD MET WITH CHAIRMAN ARAFAT THREE YEARS AGO AND IT HAD BEEN STATED THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH THE PLO. "THE CONTACTS CONTINUE", MR. TERZI SAID.

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R 222340Z JUL 77

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4600

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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HE SAID THE STATE DEPARTMENT SAID MR. SCRANTON HAD NO OFFICIAL STATUS. BUT, HE SAID, "WE STILL HAVE OUR HAND EXTENDED TO THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION FOR DIRECT CONTACTS WITH THE PLO".

UNFORTUNATELY, HE SAID, THERE HAD BEEN NO POSITIVE RESULTS YET, OTHER THAN DIRECT CONTACTS BETWEEN UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVES AND THE PLO WHEN THE PLO FULFILLED ITS HUMANISTIC ROLE IN THE VACUATION OF AMERICAN FAMILIES FROM LEBANON.

ASKED IF HE THOUGHT A UNITED NATIONS PEACE FORCE WOULD BE USEFUL IN LEBANON, MR. TERZI SAID THAT USE A MATTER ENTIRELY FOR THE LEBANESE AUTHORITIES.

A CORRESPONDENT SAID PRIMEMINISTER BEGIN HAD SET THE DATE OF OCTOBER FOR THE RESUMED GENEVA CONFERENCE. MR. TERZI ASKED "IS HE LIKE HITLER, READING ASTROLOGICAL UNCLASSIFIED

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SIGNS?" HE SAID HIS REFERENCE TO MR. BEGIN BEING LIKE HITLER WAS NOT HIS OWN. MR. BEN GURION HAD USED THAT COMPARISON IN 1963.

A CORRESPONDENT SAID THE PLO COVENANT CALLED FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL. WAS THE PLO'S OBJECTIVE STILL THE DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL?

MR. TERZI SAID THE 1964 CHARTER OF THE PLO WAS THE RESULT OF EXPULSION OF PALESTINIANS FROM THEIR HOMELAND. "THE CHARTER IS NOT THE CAUSE OF THE MISERIES" HE SAID. THE CAUSE OF THE MISERIES WAS HERZL'S OWN CHARTER FOR PALESTINE. "WE CANNOT BE ASKED TO CHANGE OUR CHARTER UNTIL THE CONDITIONS (BRINGING IT ABOUT) CHANGE" HE STATED.

THE CORRESPONDENT REPEATED -- WAS IT STILL THE PLO'S AIM

TO DESTROY ISRAEL? MR. TERZI SAID "THE OBJECT IS TO RETURN HOME AND EXERCISE THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION IN OUR OWN LAND". HE ADDED "WE CALL FOR A COEXISTENCE AND NOT A DESTRUCTION OF ANYONE". THAT HAD BEEN THE CLEAR STATEMENT OF MR. ARAFAT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 1974.

A CORRESPONDENT ASKED IF MR. TERZI WAS AWARE OF PROPOSALS BY SOME ARAB STATES THAT THE PLO BE OBSERVERS AT GENEVA. MR. TERZI SAID HE WAS NOT AWARE OF SUCH A PROPOSAL. HE DID NOT KNOW IF HIS LEADERS WERE AWARE OF SUCH.

ASKED FOR A COMMENT ON THE SUGGESTION THAT THE PALESTINIANS BE PART OF A JORDANIAN DELEGATION TO GENEVA, MR. TERZI SAID: "WE REGRET IT. WE GO (TO GENEVA) ONLY AS AN INDEPENDENT PARTY".

HE WAS ALSO ASKED FOR A COMMENT ON MR. BEGIN'S PROPOSAL
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FOR THREE MIXED PEACE COMMISSIONS WITH ISRAEL'S NEIGHBOURS. MR. TERZI SAID THE PROPOSAL "COMPLETELY DENIES THE FACT OF THE PALESTINIANS", HE SAID MR. BEGIN SPOKE OF JUDEN AND SAMARIA. MR. BEGIN FORGOT THAT THE UNITED NATIONS HAD RECOGNIZED THE PLO AS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. "THAT IS WHY BEGIN IS HERE -- TO CANCEL THIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY DECISION", HE STATED.

ASKED "IF HUSSEIN AND SADAT SAY THE PLO SHOULD BE PART OF A JORDANIAN DELEGATION, WHAT WILL YOU DO?" MR. TERZI SAID THE PLO HAD BEEN MILITARILY ACTIVE BEFORE. "WE KNOW HOW TO DEFEND OUR RIGHTS. I HOPE WE WILL NOT BE PUSHED TOO MUCH. WE CAN DEFEND OUR RIGHTS BY ALL MEANS, DIPLOMATICALLY, POLITICALLY, MILITARILY. IF WE ARE PUSHED TOO MUCH..."

ASKED IF THE UNITED STATES COULD BE THE VEHICLE FOR THIRD PARTY NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE PLO OR IF ANOTHER THIRD PARTY COULD BE SUCH AN ALTERNATIVE, MR. TERZI SAID IT WAS UP TO CYRUS VANCE TO TAKE THE FIRST STEP TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH THE PLO. "WE ARE OPEN TO ANY CONTACT PROVIDED THERE IS PRIOR RECOGNITION OF OUR INALIENABLE RIGHTS AS DEFINED BY THE UNITED NATIONS".

ASKED IF THE SKIRMISH BETWEEN LIBYA AND EGYPT AFFECTED THE PLO ADVERSELY, MR. TERZI SAID ANY SKIRMISH BETWEEN TWO ARAB STATES AFFECTED THE PALESTINIANS ADVERSELY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 22-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977USUNN02348
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770263-0043
Format: TEL
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770727/aaaaawtw.tel
Line Count: 384
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 64d6f264-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1769761
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PLO PRESS CONFERENCE JULY 22, 1977
TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, XF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/64d6f264-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009